What is claimed is:

1.   A system for processing electronic transactions, comprising:

a first interface to at least one cash account against which charges incurred through use of a linked account instrument are drawn;

5   a second interface to at least one credit account used to back said at least one cash account in the event of insufficient funds in said at least one cash account to cover the charges incurred through the use of the linked account instrument; and

an authorization server, communicating with the first interface and the

10   second interface, the authorization server authorizing individual transactions against a pre-determined cumulative limit on said at least one cash account, and performing sweeps of said at least one cash account at predetermined times to determine whether said at least one cash account contains sufficient funds to cover the charges incurred through use of the linked account instrument.

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2.   The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one cash account comprises at least one demand deposit account.

3.   The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one demand deposit

20   account comprises a plurality of demand deposit accounts.

4.   The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one cash account may be held at any financial institution.

25   5.   The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one credit account comprises a plurality of credit accounts.

6.   The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one credit account may be held at any financial institution.

7.   The system of claim 6, wherein said at least one credit account has an associated credit line at least equal to the predetermined cumulative limit.

5   8.   The system of claim 1, wherein the authorization server comprises at least one of an account information database, an account balance database, and a transaction history database.

9.   The system of claim 1, wherein individual automated clearing

10   house debits are generated for each transaction initiated with the linked account instrument.

10.   The system of claim 9, wherein the automated clearing house debits are first processed against said at least one cash account via an automated

15   clearing house.

11.   The system of claim 10, wherein the automated clearing house debits are processed against said at least one cash account in the order in which they were generated.

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12.   The system of claim 10, wherein each automated clearing house debit is processed against said at least one cash account based on the relative size of its amount.

25   13.   The system of claim 12, wherein the smallest debit amounts are processed against said at least one cash account first, leaving larger debits that cannot be satisfied by said at least one cash account to be processed against said at least one credit account.

14.   The system of claim 12, wherein the largest debit amounts are processed against said at least one cash account first, leaving smaller debits that cannot be satisfied by said at least one cash account to be processed against said at least one credit account.

15.   The system of claim 10, wherein an entire debit amount is processed against said at least one credit account in the event that there are funds in said at least one cash account that can only cover a percentage of the debit amount.

16.   The system of claim 10, wherein a first percentage of the debit amount is processed against said at least one cash account, and a second percentage of the debit amount is processed against said at least one credit account in the event that there are funds in said at least one cash account that cannot satisfy the entire debit amount.

17.   The system of claim 1, wherein the predetermined cumulative limit is a daily limit, and the authorization server is configured to decline to authorize additional transactions attempted with the linked account instrument once the daily limit has been reached.

18.   The system of claim 17, wherein the authorization server is configured to cease authorizing transactions attempted with the linked account instrument if a first sweep of said at least one cash account finds insufficient funds to satisfy previous charges incurred through use of the linked account instrument.

19.   The system of claim 18, wherein said at least one credit account used to back said at least one cash account will be cleared if a subsequent sweep

of said at least one cash account finds adequate funds to satisfy those funds covered by said at least one credit account.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the authorization server is configured to refresh the pre-determined cumulative limit and authorize transactions after said at least one credit account has been cleared.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein a user of the linked account instrument is charged a fee for use of said at least one credit account.

22. The system of claim 18, wherein the authorization server is configured to continue to cease authorizing transactions attempted with the linked account instrument if a predetermined number of subsequent sweeps of said at least one cash account fail to find sufficient funds to satisfy the charges incurred through use of the linked account instrument.

23. The system of claim 17, wherein the authorization server is configured to continue to authorize linked account card transactions up to the predetermined cumulative limit against available credit on the credit account, even if a first sweep of the cash account finds insufficient funds to satisfy previous charges.

24. A method for accessing funds in at least one cash account, comprising the steps of:

a) interfacing to an authorization server to authorize individual transactions initiated through use of a linked account instrument against a predetermined cumulative limit on said at least one cash account; and

b) performing sweeps of said at least one cash account to determine whether charges incurred through use of the linked account card can

be satisfied by funds in said at least one cash account, or charged against at least one designated backing credit account.

25.   The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one cash account comprises at least one demand deposit account.

26.   The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one demand deposit account comprises a plurality of demand deposit accounts.

27.   The method of claim 24, wherein step (a) further comprises the step of:

c) holding said at least one cash account at any financial institution.

28.   The method of claim 24, wherein said at least one credit account comprises a plurality of credit accounts.

29.   The method of claim 24, wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

d) holding said at least one credit account at any financial institution.

30.   The method of claim 24, wherein step (b) further comprises the step of:

e) providing an associated credit line for said at least one credit account that is at least equal to the predetermined cumulative limit.

31.   The method of claim 24, wherein the authorization server comprises at least one of an account information database, an account balance database, and a transaction history database.

32.   The method of claim 24, wherein step (a) further comprises the step of:

· f) generating individual automated clearing house debits for each transaction initiated with the linked account instrument, and authorized

5   by the authorization server.

33.   The method of claim 32, wherein step (f) further comprises the step of:

g) processing the automated clearing house debits against said at least

10   one cash account via an automated clearing house.

34.   The method of claim 33, wherein step (g) further comprises the step of:

h) processing the automated clearing debits against said at least one cash

15   account in the order in which they were generated.

35.   The method of claim 33, wherein step (g) further comprises the step of:

i) processing each automated clearing house debit against said at least

20   one cash account based on the relative size of its amount.

36.   The method of claim 35, wherein step (i) further comprises the step of:

j) processing the smallest debit amounts against said at least one cash

25   account first, leaving larger debits that cannot be satisfied by said at least

one cash account to be processed against said at least one credit account.

37.   The method of claim 35, wherein step (i) further comprises the step of:

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k) processing the largest debit amounts against said at least one cash account first, leaving smaller debits that cannot be satisfied by said at least one cash account to be processed against said at least one credit account.

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38.   The method of claim 33, wherein step (g) further comprises the step of:

l) processing an entire debit amount against said at least one credit account in the event that there are funds in said at least one cash account that can only cover a percentage of the debit amount.

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39.   The method of claim 33, wherein step (g) further comprises the step of:

m) processing a first percentage of the debit amount against said at least one cash account and a second percentage of the debit amount is processed against said at least one credit account in the event that there are funds in said at least one cash account that cannot satisfy the entire debit amount.

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40.   The method of claim 24, wherein the predetermined cumulative limit is a daily limit.

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41.   The method of claim 40, wherein step (a) further comprises the step of:

n) ceasing to authorize additional transactions attempted with the linked account instrument once the predetermined cumulative limit has been reached.

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42.   The method of claim 41, further comprising the step of:

o) ceasing to authorize transactions attempted with the linked account instrument if a first sweep of said at least one cash account finds insufficient funds to satisfy previous charges incurred through use of the linked account instrument.

43.   The method of claim 42 , further comprising the step of:

p) clearing said at least one credit account if a subsequent sweep of said at least one cash account finds adequate funds to satisfy those funds temporarily covered by said at least one credit account.

44.   The method of claim 43, further comprising the steps of:

q) refreshing the predetermined cumulative limit; and

r) authorizing transactions after said at least one credit account has been cleared.

45.   The method of claim 44, further comprising the step of:

s) charging a user of the linked account instrument a fee for use of said at least one credit account.

46.   The method of claim 42, further comprising the step of:

t) continuing to cease authorization of transactions attempted with the linked account instrument if a predetermined number of subsequent sweeps of said at least one cash account fail to find sufficient funds to satisfy the charges incurred through use of the linked account instrument.

47.   The method of claim 41, further comprising the step of:

u) continuing to authorize linked account instrument transactions up to the predetermined cumulative limit against available credit on said at

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least one credit account, even if a first sweep of said at least one cash account finds insufficient funds to satisfy previous charges.